

**Listing of Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. to 9. (canceled)

10. (currently amended) A rod doctor suitable for metering an amount of a coating mix applied to a surface of a moving web of board or paper, or to an applicator roll surface of a film-transfer coater, and for leveling the applied coat, comprising:

a support frame having a cradle formed therein; and

a rod positioned in the cradle of said support so as to be capable of rotating therein in contact with a coating surface layer adhered to a surface of the cradle, ~~a surface of the cradle~~ on which said rod rotates, ~~having a~~ the coating surface layer being of a material which improves wear resistance and sliding friction properties of the cradle and said rod.

11. (previously presented) The rod doctor of claim 10, wherein a surface of the rod has a coating surface layer of a material which improves wear resistance and sliding friction properties of said rod.

12. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 10, wherein the coating surface layer has a thickness of from 1 nm to 90  $\mu$  m.

13. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 11, wherein the coating surface layers have a thickness of from 1 nm to 90  $\mu$  m.

14. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 10, wherein the coating surface layer is comprised of a silicon-molybdenum alloy.

15. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 11, wherein the coating surface layers are comprised of a silicon-molybdenum alloy.

16. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 12, wherein the coating surface layer is comprised of a silicon-molybdenum alloy.

17. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 13, wherein the coating surface layers are comprised of a silicon-molybdenum alloy.

18. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 10, wherein the coating surface layer is comprised of diamond.

19. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 11, wherein the coating surface layers are comprised of diamond.

20. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 12, wherein the coating surface layer is comprised of diamond.

21. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 13, wherein the coating surface layers are comprised of diamond.

22. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 10, wherein the coating surface layer is comprised of chromium.

23. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 11, wherein the coating surface layers are comprised of chromium.

24. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 12, wherein the coating surface layer is comprised of chromium.

25. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 13, wherein the coating surface layers are comprised of chromium.

26. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 10, wherein the coating surface layer is comprised of a chromium-teflon composition.

27. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 11, wherein the coating surface layers are comprised of a chromium-teflon composition.

28. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 12, wherein the coating surface layer is comprised of a chromium-teflon composition.

29. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 13, wherein the coating surface layers are comprised of a chromium-teflon composition.

30. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 10, wherein the coating surface layer was applied using a vacuum deposition technique.

31. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 11, wherein the coating surface layers were applied using a vacuum deposition technique.

32. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 12, wherein the coating surface layer was applied using a vacuum deposition technique.

33. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 13, wherein the coating surface layers were applied using a vacuum deposition technique.

34. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 14, wherein the coating surface layer was applied using a vacuum deposition technique.

35. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 15, wherein the coating surface layers were applied using a vacuum deposition technique.

36. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 18, wherein the coating surface layer was applied using a vacuum deposition technique.

37. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 19, wherein the coating surface layers were applied using a vacuum deposition technique.

38. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 22, wherein the coating surface layer was applied using a vacuum deposition technique.

39. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 23, wherein the coating surface layers were applied using a vacuum deposition technique.

40. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 26, wherein the coating surface layer was applied using a vacuum deposition technique.

41. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 27, wherein the coating surface layers were applied using a vacuum deposition technique.

42. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 10, wherein the coating surface layer was applied using a thermal spraying technique.

43. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 11, wherein the coating surface layers were applied using a thermal spraying technique.

44. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 12, wherein the coating surface layer was applied using a thermal spraying technique.

45. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 13, wherein the coating surface layers were applied using a thermal spraying technique.

46. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 14, wherein the coating surface layer was applied using a thermal spraying technique.

47. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 15, wherein the coating surface layers were applied using a thermal spraying technique.

48. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 18, wherein the coating surface layer was applied using a thermal spraying technique.

49. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 19, wherein the coating surface layers were applied using a thermal spraying technique.

50. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 22, wherein the coating surface layer was applied using a thermal spraying technique.

51. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 23, wherein the coating surface layers were applied using a thermal spraying technique.

52. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 26, wherein the coating surface layer was applied using a thermal spraying technique.

53. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 27, wherein the coating surface layers were applied using a thermal spraying technique.

54. (currently amended) A rod doctor suitable for metering an amount of a coating mix applied to a surface of a moving web of board or paper, or to an applicator roll surface of a film-transfer coater, and for leveling the applied coat, comprising:

a support frame having a cradle formed therein;

a rod positioned in the cradle of said support so as to be capable of rotating therein in contact with a coating surface layer adhered to a surface of the cradle, ~~a surface of the cradle~~ on which said rod rotates, ~~being covered by a~~ the coating surface layer being of a material which improves wear

resistance and sliding friction properties of the cradle and said rod, the coating surface layer being comprised of a silicon-molybdenum alloy.

55. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 54, wherein a surface of the rod is covered by a coating surface layer of a material which improves wear resistance and sliding friction properties of said rod.

56. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 54, wherein the coating surface layer has a thickness of from 1 nm to 90  $\mu$  m.

57. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 55, wherein the coating surface layers have a thickness of from 1 nm to 90  $\mu$  m.

58. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 55, wherein at least one of the coating surface layers was applied using a vacuum deposition technique.

59. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 55, wherein at least one of the coating surface layers was applied using a thermal spraying technique.

60. (currently amended) A rod doctor suitable for metering an amount of a coating mix applied to a surface of a moving web of board or paper, or to an applicator roll surface of a film-transfer coater, and for leveling the applied coat, comprising:

a support frame having a cradle formed therein;

a rod positioned in the cradle of said support so as to be capable of rotating therein in contact with a coating surface layer adhered to a surface of the cradle, ~~a surface of the cradle~~ on which said rod rotates, ~~being covered by a~~ the coating surface layer being of a material which improves wear resistance and sliding friction properties of the cradle and said rod, wherein the coating surface layer is comprised of diamond.

61. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 60, wherein a surface of the rod is covered by a coating surface layer of a material which improves wear resistance and sliding friction properties of said rod.

62. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 60, wherein the coating surface layer has a thickness of from 1 nm to 90  $\mu$  m.

63. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 61, wherein the coating surface layers have a thickness of from 1 nm to 90  $\mu$  m.

64. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 61, wherein at least one of the coating surface layers was applied using a vacuum deposition technique.

65. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 61, wherein at least one of the coating surface layers was applied using a thermal spraying technique.